



Summary

Gender Biases in Career Advice

Corporate Partnership Board Event

22 March 2022



March on Gender

RAISING THE BAR: BETTER
POLICIES FOR GENDER **EQUALITY**



Background

Companies across the transport sector struggle to achieve gender-diverse workforces. Closing gender gaps in education is primordial to closing gender gaps in the workplace.

This workshop addressed the topic of gender biases in career advice looking at how students develop ideas about careers at early stages in their lives, and the role their backgrounds and communities played in this, and the advice and access they have to understanding types of jobs and careers at later phases of their education. Key questions were tackled on how best companies can interact with schools, communities and universities to shape the understanding and experiences of children at critical stages before they make important educational and career path decisions.

Event objectives

The results of this workshop will contribute to the theme of the 2022 ITF Summit, 'Transport for Inclusive Societies', and in particular to the session on 19th May 'All aboard: building a more diverse and equitable transport workforce'. This Corporate Partnership Board workshop was held virtually on 22 March 2022, as part of the Gender Workstream of the Corporate Partnership Board. It also formed part of the OECD's March on Gender Programme, a series of events through the month of March focusing on gender aspects of different policy discussions.

Event summary

The event was divided into two different sections. The first part of the meeting focused on listening to speakers (a guest speaker from the OECD and three professionals from Corporate Partnership Board companies), while the second part of the meeting was devoted to an informal discussion among the participants.



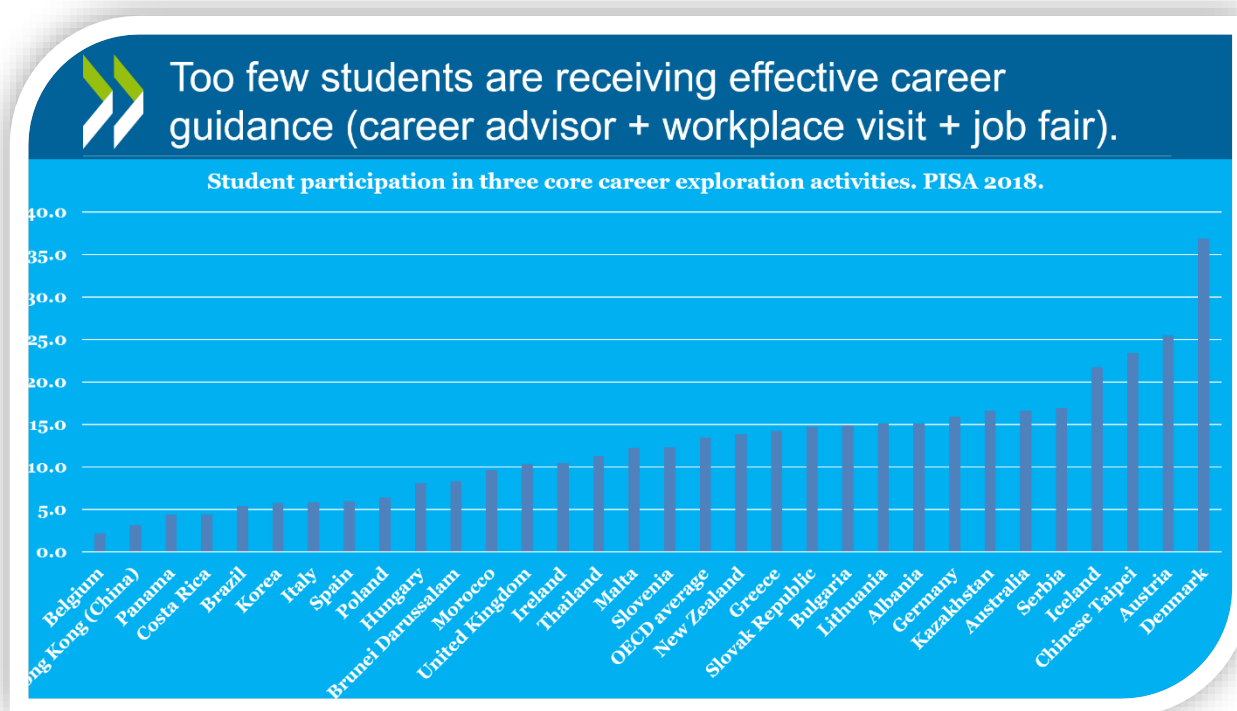
Presentations from Speakers

Guest speaker Anthony Mann, Senior Policy Analyst, Directorate for Education and Skills (OECD) focused his presentation on showing main findings from recent **OECD's work on career guidance and the transitions of girls through education into employment.**

Anthony explained that the goals of career guidance are manifold and can be looked at from different perspectives (economic efficiency, educational, psychological and social justice, among others).

With regards to gender biases in career aspirations, the OECD's 2021 report '[The future at five: gendered aspirations of five year olds](#)' found that gender played into children aspirations. Gender norms are apparent even among 5-years old— one in four of the 30 most popular roles selected by girls are in traditionally female-dominated occupations; while the figure for boys for traditionally male-dominated occupations is one in two.

Anthony showed that career guidance in OECD countries remains a rarity. According to the [2018 PISA survey](#) only half of students now leaving secondary education had seen a guidance counsellor in school by this age and less than 40% attended a job fair or been on a workplace visit. There is a marked disparity in career guidance received by students across countries, as highlighted in the below chart:



Finally, Anthony explained that other [OECD studies](#) showed that there is also a lack of understanding of how education and skills relate to different jobs. For example, many young people note that they would like to work in 'green' jobs, but have not grasped that several such jobs require STEM skills.



Amna Hamza, Manager Organisation Development and Communication at Total Parco presented the vision of Total Parco in Pakistan to contributing to a positive social impact towards shaping a more equal future. In line with SDG5, Total Parco are working to raise awareness, break barriers and enable women of all ages to reach their potential. Within the broad range of activities undertaken at the company, a few in particular were highlighted:

- **Pink Riders:** founded to teach women to ride motorbikes, with a focus on road safety. These new driving skills not only enable better access to new opportunities, education and other services, but also gives women greater choice and possibility in their careers.
- **Retail sector¹:** As the number of women drivers increase, Total Parco are promoting gender balance across all business lines.

Nathan Ashley, Strategic Policy Manager, Equity & Safety Europe at Voi Technology outlined that Diversity & Inclusion is a cornerstone of what Voi Technology stands for. The company actively works to ensure a more inclusive workforce. Job offers at Voi are shared across platforms like the 'Women in Transport' network or 'Inserta' in Fundación Adecco.

Voi works with schools, universities and students at different stages of the education process, such as through funding MsC and PhDs, providing assistance with **course content** to shape the curriculum and ensuring it is more inclusive, and through volunteering².

Paulo Humanes, Director of Mobility at CEiiA in Portugal³, explain that his company works with schoolchildren and university students of different ages throughout the year on different programmes, such as over the summer (**hosting** a one-month long programme for 15-23 year olds to develop and test new approaches to sustainable living) and through a four-day, yearly mentorship with thirteen-year-olds⁴.

These programmes are aimed at helping students develop an understanding of different jobs and careers in sustainability, in particular the role of design and engineering, and giving them practical experience in a workplace. Following the programme, CEiiA provides support to schools to implement certain students' projects, so that that students can see their idea come to fruition.

¹ For example at fuelling forecourts across Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi, women are now being trained to work in product sales.

² A "voi.lunteering" programme allows Voi staff to have two days per year to visit schools and give talks about careers in micromobility. With youth as users of micromobility, Voi engages with them to show the connection between being users and being able to work for micro-mobility companies.

³ CEiiA is a Centre of Engineering and Product Development, whose focus is on sustainability in the automotive, urban mobility, ocean and space industries.

⁴ These consists of workshops in which students are asked to work to develop a proposal that will enhance sustainability within their communities, schools or homes. Throughout the process, students interact with engineers working on different aspects of sustainability. As part of the programme, students work with CEiiA's Marketing Department to optimise the presentation of their proposals.



Key takeaways for companies

Engage with career-related learning at an early age

Studies show that career biases happen at a young age, therefore early career-related learning should be encouraged. Oftentimes, children make subject choices in early teens, without understanding the impact this will have in later educational paths and career choices. Subject choices can be part of a 'ruling-out process' meaning, for example, that not taking certain subject can make it more difficult to pursue a career in STEM. In this respect, companies can be at the forefront in helping students understand what subjects are needed for different careers.

Diversify geographical outreach to schools and universities

At early stages, students are influenced by what they see around them in their families and communities. Information bias plays a role in school students (eg in rural and other disadvantaged areas) may not have role models, which may limit their understanding of the workplace and influence their own career choices. Companies should aim to ensure a diverse as possible outreach to schools and universities beyond those in the near vicinity or only those with whom the company has a learning agreement.

Embrace innovative methods and technologies in your companies

Online learning and video-conferencing tools can help reach school and university students that are further away from companies' own offices.

Not only does this allow access to this information and insights to students who may otherwise not be in contact with such jobs or career specialists in their own communities, it also allows more staff to participate at such an event while minimising time loss due to travel.

Help ensure students are taught the right skills

Effectively engage with educational institutions to ensure the curriculum covers vital aspects for future skills and workplace needs. This also helps ensure that courses are better calibrated to the futures skills that companies will need.

Consider engaging also in non-formal education

Many adults face a crossroads in their careers. Experience and key competencies have been gained during their previous jobs are often transferable through different sectors. Companies should consider engaging with courses and participants in non-formal education also to capitalise on a potential, already experienced, workforce. This is especially important when trying to bridge gender career gaps, given the gendered education and social norms that have led many women to take career paths that are far removed from their interests.



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